

REQUEST FOR COMMENT /SOURCES SOUGHT NOTICE – SUPPORT FOR THE NIH A-110 SERVICE CENTER

This Request for Comment (RFC)/Sources Sought Notice (SS) is for information and planning purposes only and shall not be construed as a solicitation or as an obligation on the part of the National Cancer Institute (NCI). The purpose of this RFC/SS is to obtain public comment designed to improve and clarify the Statement of Work and to identify potential sources that are interested in and capable of performing the work described herein. The NCI welcomes comments from all individuals and concerns. The NCI does not intend to award a contract on the basis of responses nor otherwise pay for the preparation of any information submitted or the NCI's use of such information. Acknowledgment of receipt of responses will not be made, nor will respondents be notified of NCI's evaluation of the information received. As a result of this RFC/SS, the NCI may issue a Request for Proposal (RFP). However, should such a requirement materialize, no basis for claims against the NCI shall arise as a result of a response to this RFC/SS or the NCI's use of such information as either part of our evaluation process or in developing specifications for any subsequent requirement.

Request for Comment :

The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-110 (A-110) provides public access under some circumstances to research data through the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). A-110 applies to new and competing continuation awards made after April 17, 2000, and applies to data that are (1) first produced in a project that is supported in whole or in part with Federal funds; and (2) cited publicly and officially by a Federal agency in support of an action that has the force and effect of law, i.e., regulations and administrative orders.

Requests made under OMB Circular A-110 differ from traditional requests made under the FOIA, because A-110 allows the public to request data collected by institutions of higher education, hospitals, and non-profit institutions that receive grants and other financial assistance provided by Federal agencies. Such requests will still be made through the traditional FOIA channels. However, most FOIA offices lack the scientific and technical expertise that is necessary to review the responsive data set and ensure that it has been redacted in accordance with A-110 and the FOIA.

The Contractor will primarily act as a liaison between the NIH A-110 Service Center and the NIH Grantee Institution in generating a redacted data set that is responsive to an A-110 request, and in handling fees associated with processing a request. Once the A-110 Service Center receives a request, it will be forwarded to the Contractor for processing. The Contractor will be responsible for contacting the Grantee Institution and obtaining a redacted copy of the responsive data set from the Grantee Institution. The Grantee Institution will provide, along with the redacted data set, a written justification, detailing what information was redacted and why. The Contractor will review the redacted data set for responsiveness, and to ensure that all personal identifiers and proprietary information were removed. If necessary, the Contractor will travel to the Grantee Institution to perform this review, and will negotiate with the Grantee Institution to generate a redacted data set that is releasable under A-110 and the FOIA.

Further, the Contractor will be responsible for the collection and accounting of fees associated with processing a request. The Contractor will obtain a cost estimate, to provide a redacted data set, from the Grantee Institution and will generate its own cost estimate. The Contractor will receive a prepayment from the requestor, and will hold the monies in a non-interest-bearing account while the request is processed. Once processing is complete but prior to the release of the redacted data, the Contractor shall collect any amount due or refund any amount owed to the requestor. The Contractor shall also reimburse the Grantee Institution out of the fees held in the non-interest bearing account. Any monies still remaining (after the Grantee Institution is reimbursed) shall be used to defray the costs, first to the Contractor and then to the NIH A-110 Service Center.

A copy of the Draft Statement of Work (SOW) pertaining to the requirement may be accessed on the NCI Research Contracts Branch External Website at URL: <http://rcb.nci.nih.gov/>. Once there, click on Current Requests for Proposals. Under the section entitled Sources Sought/Request for Information click on

number SS-NCI-ESS-2002 entitled, "Support for the NIH A-110 Service Center". Any comments pertaining to the SOW that will clarify the Government's requirement or enhance a contractor's ability to perform the work would be greatly appreciated.

In addition to any comments pertaining to the SOW, interested organizations should submit a capability statement of approximately 10 pages that details the ability to perform the aspects of the effort described above. All proprietary information should be marked as such. Responses will be reviewed only by NIH personnel and will be held in a confidential manner.

All respondents are asked to indicate the type and size of your business organization, e.g., large business, small business, small disadvantaged business, women-owned business, 8(a), hubzone, historically black college or minority institution, educational institution, profit/non-profit hospital, or other non-profit organization in your response. In the event an RFP is issued, North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) code 514199 with a size standard of \$5,000,000 is being considered.

Responses are due no later than 3:00 p.m. eastern prevailing time on December 19, 2001. Please submit three (3) copies of your response to the attention of: Sharon Cummings, Contract Specialist, Epidemiology and Support Section, Research Contracts Branch, OM, National Cancer Institute, and if using regular U.S. mail - Executive Plaza South, Suite 620, MSC 7224, Bethesda, MD 20892-7224; or if hand delivered or using a courier service - 6120 Executive Boulevard, Suite 620, Rockville, MD 20852. Facsimile responses may be submitted by FAX to 301-480-0241 or email responses may be sent to cummings@mail.nih.gov.

Telephone inquiries should be addressed to Sharon Cummings at 301-435-3809.